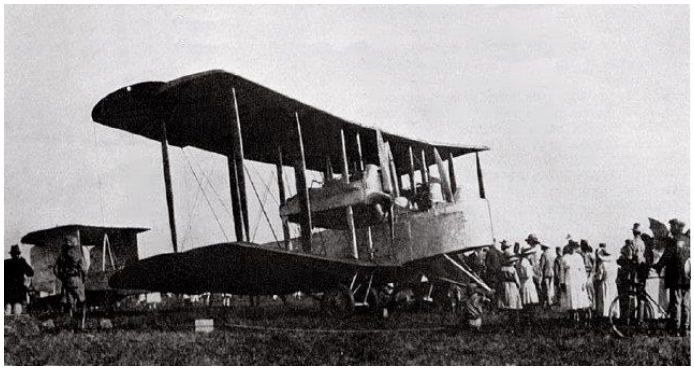
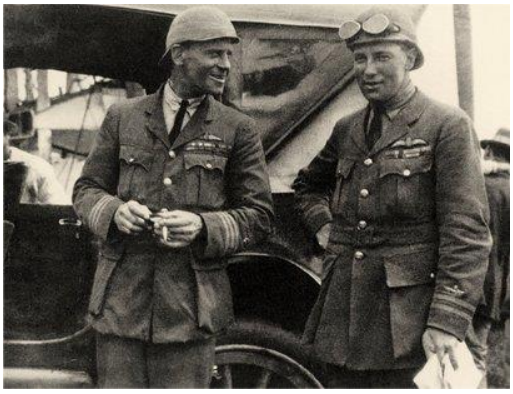
CENTENARY OF AVIATION IN ZIMBABWE

Issued 5th March, 2020

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 2020)[2]





P van Tyneveld & CJO Brand

Z: Silver Queen II (5-6 March 1920)

The first aircraft to land in Zimbabwe was a Vickers Vimy named the Silver Queen. Piloted by two South African airmen, Lieutenant Colonel P. van Ryneveld and Captain CJQ Brand, they were the eventual winners in a competition to fly, trans-Africa, from the United Kingdom to Cape Town in South Africa. Their first plane was written off in an accident in North Africa. The replacement, Silver Queen II, eventually landed on the race course in Bulawayo at mid-day on 5th March 1920 so marking the start of aviation in this country. The next day, while taking off on route to South Africa the plane nicked the trees and crash-landed on what is today Bulawayo Golf Course. The pilots were unhurt but the plane was a complete wreck. Another replacement plane was sent up from South Africa, allowing the pilots to complete their epic journey.



BOAC Short Solent S45 “Southampton”, G-AHIN

A: BOAC Solent (1947 -1950)

In 1947 British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) introduced the Short Solent S45 class flying boat on a new trans-African airmail route from Southampton to the Vaal Dam near Johannesburg, South Africa. The low-flying Solent’s carried a crew of seven, with up to 34 passengers plus mail and cargo. There was no flying at night, and the route included overnight stops in Sicily (Italy), on the Nile River at Luxor (Egypt), on Lake Victoria at Kampala (Uganda) and Victoria Falls where they landed on a wide flat stretch of the Zambezi River seven km upstream of the waterfall. Commercial operations in Zimbabwe lasted from the inaugural flight which landed on 4 May 1948 to November 1950 when regular air flights could land at the

newly completed airport at Livingstone, Zambia.



E: Vickers Viscount (1956 -1989)

Central African Airways (CAA) acquired five Vickers Viscount 748D aircraft in 1956 at a cost, including spares, of just under 2 million pounds. They were deployed on regional routes within the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and to South Africa, as well as for some years on the weekly long haul 'Zambezi' service to London. Additional Viscounts were purchased in the 1960s, and proved to be the mainstay of the airline fleet and its successor Air Rhodesia (which became Air Zimbabwe in 1980). This iconic aircraft's reliability and popularity with crew and passengers ensured that it continued in service on domestic routes until the end of the 1980s.



R: Boeing 707 (1980-1997)

Following independence in 1980 the national carrier Air Rhodesia was transformed into the new Air Zimbabwe. The local airline desired to offer long-haul services and on 2nd April 1980 when they inaugurated a direct Zimbabwe-UK service into London Gatwick using a special long range version of the Boeing 707 leased from South African Airways. This was the start of Air Zimbabwe's 17-year relationship with the stalwart Boeing 707, eventually acquiring five of their own which served their long-haul routes until the acquisition of two new wide-body 767's from Boeing in 1989.

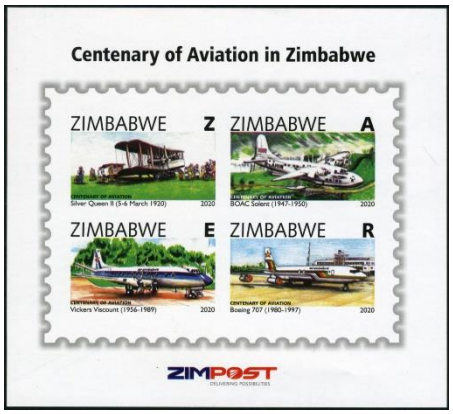
The Stamps











(Reduced to 50% of actual size)

Catalogue Listings

SG	ZSC[1]	Value	Description
1458	851	Z	Silver Queen II (5-6 March 1910)
1459	852	A	BOAC Solent (1947-1950)
1460	853	E	Vickers Viscount (1956-1989)
1461	854	R	Boeing 707 (1980-1997)
MS1462	MS42		Imperforate miniature sheet with set in se-tenant block

Technical details

Stamp size: Sheet stamps: 42 x 28 mm
Miniature sheet 116 x 106 mm

Sheet Size: 50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet

Artist: Fredy Tembo

Paper: ZSC paper type J: paper described by Zimpost as “Chancellor Litho PVA Gummed Postage Stamp Paper”. This paper is produced by

	Tullis Russell Coaters of Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland. Under UV there is no fluorescence either front or back, the stamp appears to be very dark
Print colours:	Cyan, magenta, yellow & black
Perforations:	SG 14½; ZSC 14¼ Top margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Origination:	Fredwill Designs (Pvt) Ltd
Printer's Imprint:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom margin, below Row 10 Column 3. Imprint printed in black
Cylinder numbers:	Sheet stamps only - Top margin above R1/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Colour register:	Sheet stamps only - Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R1/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Sheet Value:	Sheet stamps only - Top margin, above R1/5, printed in black
Sheet Number:	Sheet stamps only - Type SN 7 with printed 'ZIMPOST' prefix, right margin opposite R1/5 reading down
Bar codes:	Sheet stamps only - Opposite R10/5, printed in black, numbers: Z 2 009113 000820 A 2 009113 000837 E 2 009113 000844 Z 2 009113 000851
Print numbers:	Z 400,000 A 20,000 E. 20,000 R 60,000 Miniature sheet 1,000
Issue date:	5th March, 2020

Postal Rates

Postal rates applicable as at date of issue – Z = $10.00; A = $50.00; E = $80.000; R = $100.00.

The sets were sold by the Philatelic Bureau for US$5.00 per set, with US$6.00 for the first day cover. Giving an exchange rate of US$1:ZWL$48. This is a high exchange rate given that the official Reserve Bank rate was about US$1:ZWL$17.

Zimbabwe was to experience its first lockdown due to the Covid-19 from 30th March to 2nd May 2020. The Philatelic Bureau did not start sending out this issue to its external customers until July 2020, by which time the RBZ exchange rate had crept up to circa US$1:ZWL$72.

Milton Mutengezanwa reported that these stamps only came into circulation on 15th June 2020.

Whilst the dispatch of orders may have been sent by the Bureau in July, flights through its usual route through South Africa couldn't leave the country as there were no incoming flights to that country. Flights resumed from 1st October 2020, but with the build up of mail was not delivered until much later.



Cover postmarked 24 JUL 2020, received in UK on 21st November

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been reported.

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds which are more noticeable with the solid colours.



Z value: Cyan rings above ‘March 1920’
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



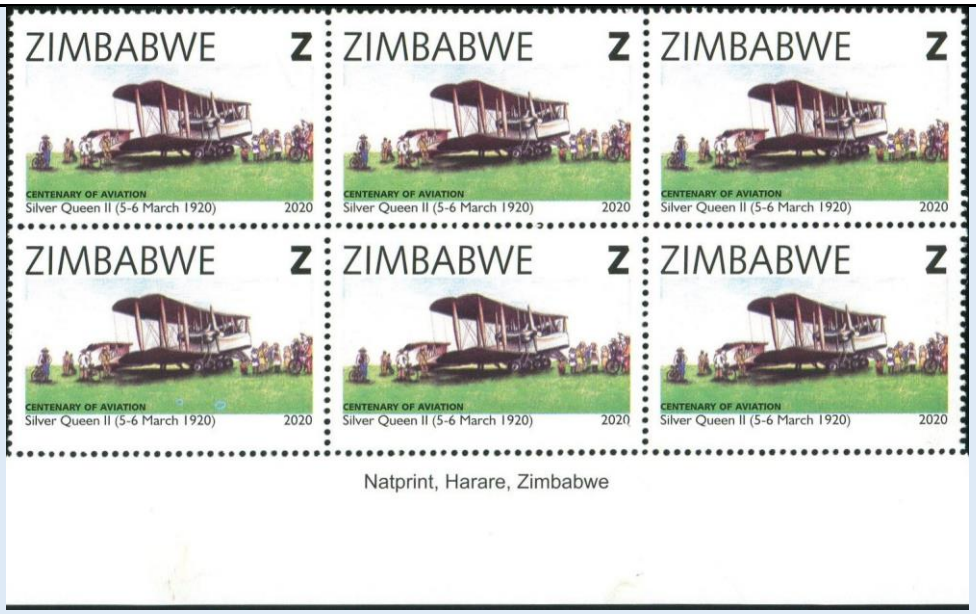
Z value: Shift of perforation down and to right



Z value: Shift of perforations to the right
(Source – eBay January 2021)



Z value: Shift of perforations down
(Source eBay July 2025)



Z value: Early first strike of the perforator, leaving small gap in vertical perfs
Bottom row stamps slightly higher than the row above
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



Z value: Lower row of stamps with perforation short to the top (21 vertical perfs) due to early strike of perforator. Upper row with shorter stamps due to earlier strike of perforator for row above (20 verical perfs)



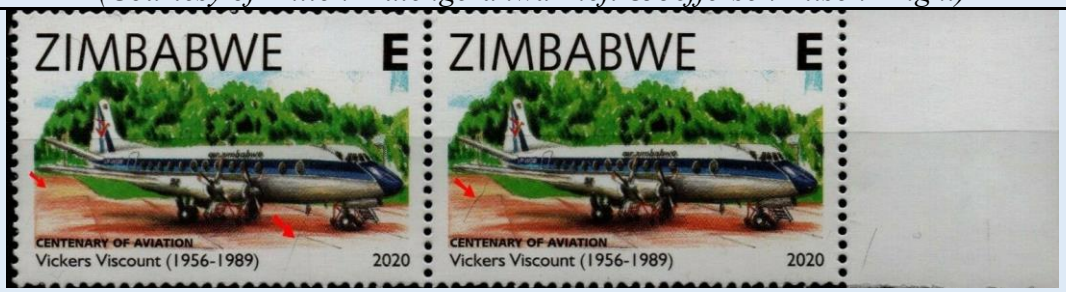
A value: Early strike of perforator leaving small gap to the top of R10 vertical perfs. R9 the perforator has moved slightly to the right, with vertical perforations of R10 & 9 not being in line

(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



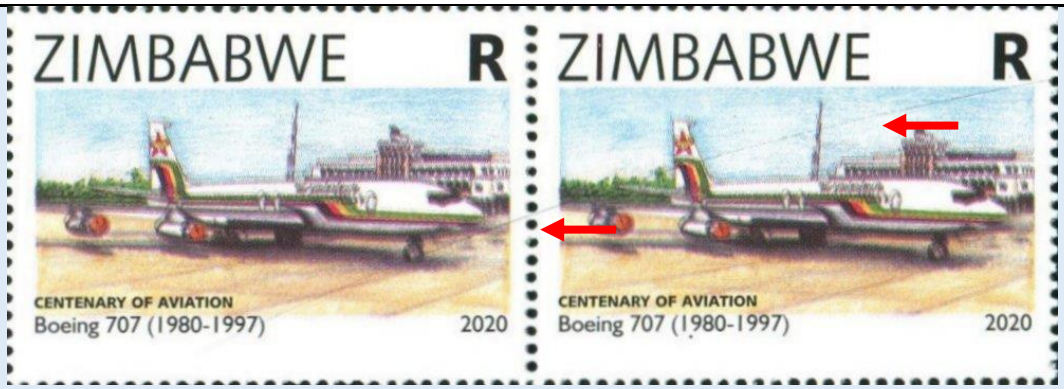
E value: Additional yellow paintwork to fuselage. Batch flaw with reducing amount of yellow. Cyl 1A R9/3

(Courtesy of Milton Mutengezanwa - left & Jefferson Ritson - right)

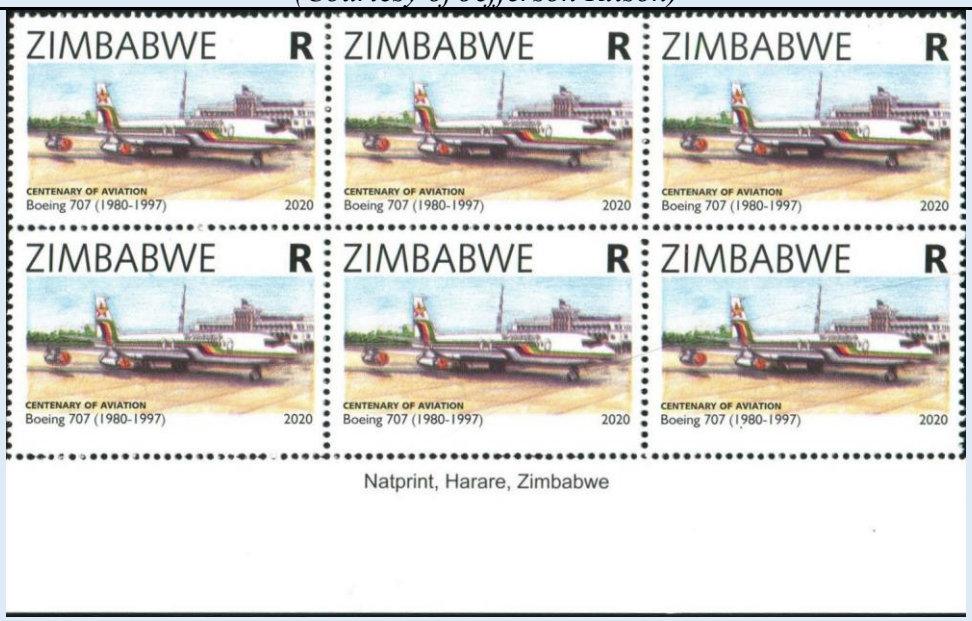


E Value: Various black lines on both stamps and margin

(Source eBay March 2022)



R value: Line across right hand stamp. R10/3& 4
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)



R value: Early strike of perforator leaving small gap to the top of R10 vertical perfs.
(Courtsey of Jefferson Ritson)



R value: Movement of black plate giving blurred look to plane and airport building.



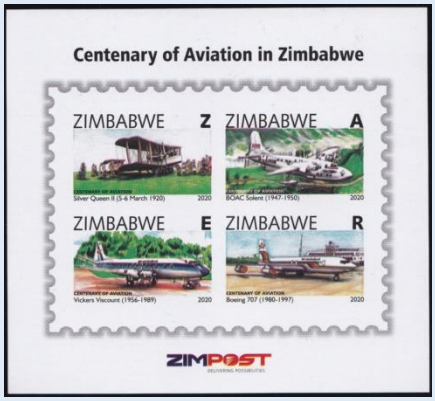
R value: Magenta smudge below 'R' on right stamp
(Source eBay March 2022)



R value: Movement if perforations down



R value: shift of perforations down, on piece
(Courtesy of Milton Mutengezanwa)



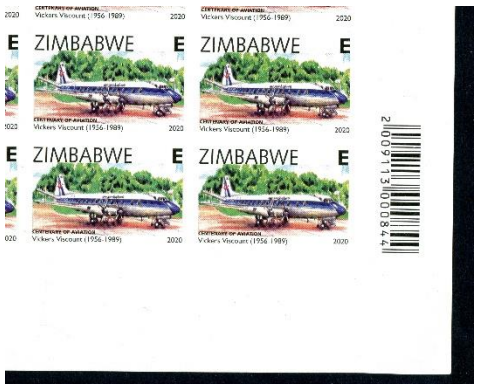


Two different sizes of the miniature sheet have been noted, these being
116 x 106 mm and 135 x 112 mm.
These are easilt sptted dues to the different sized marginal gutters

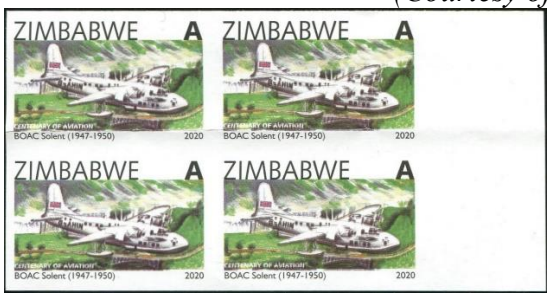
(Courtesy of Narendhra Morar)

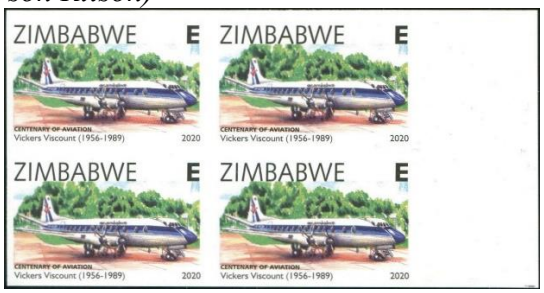
Proofs

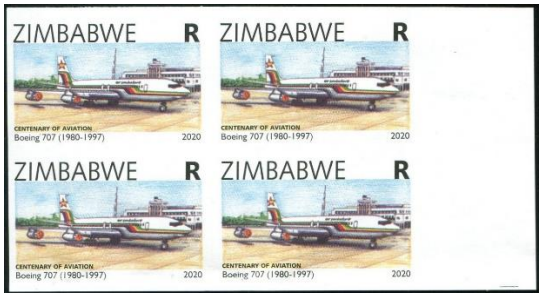




A & E values: Imperforate blocks with bar code, both probably proof stamps.
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)





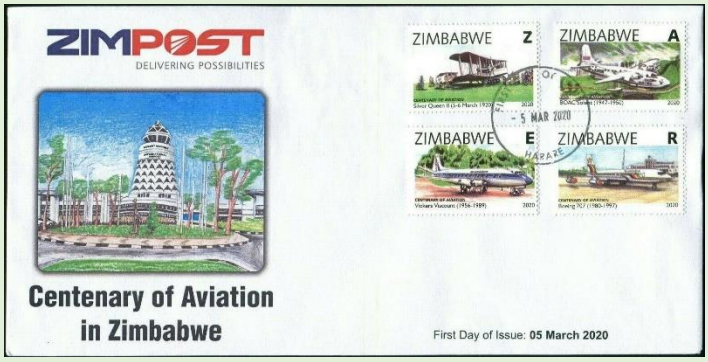


A, E & R values: Imperforate proofs
(Courtesy of Jefferson Ritson)

First Day Covers

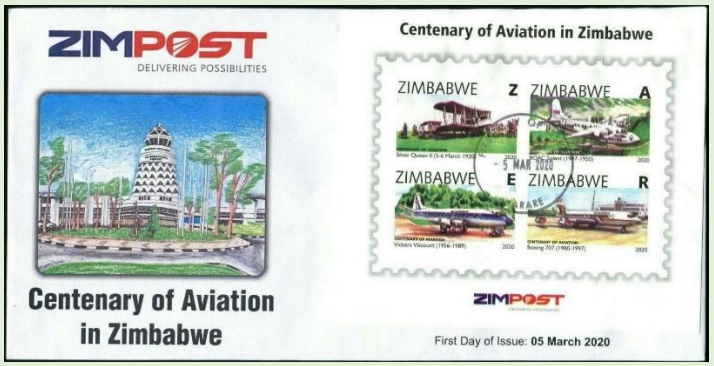
ZimPost produced a First Day Cover, which was postmarked by the Philatelic Bureau with a postmark reading "First Day of Issue/Harare".

ZW173 (ZimPost)



220 x 110 mm

ZW173MS (ZimPost)

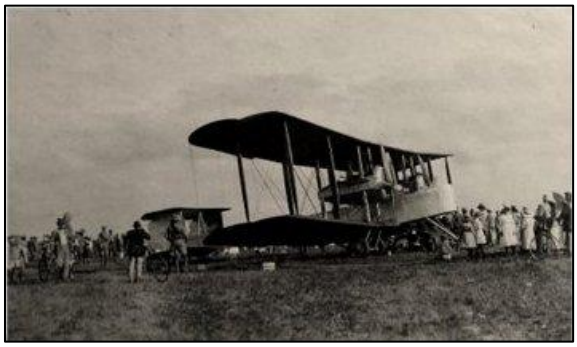


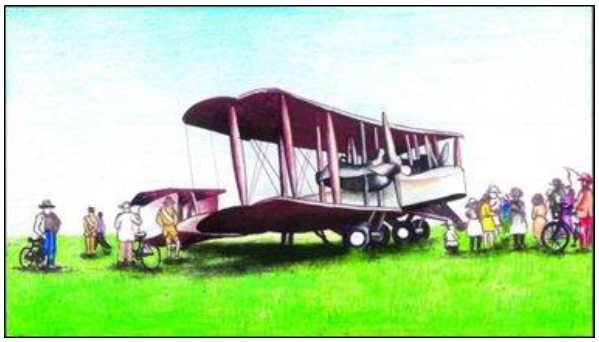
220 x 110 mm

Related Material

Photographs & preliminary artwork

These images were within a virtual presentation by Rob Burrett at the RSC 2023 conference. Rob was very much involved in the project for these stamps. Unfortunately, much of his material was stored on his laptop, which was subsequently stolen. This is what he has been able to subsequently pull together for the presentation. It shows the photographs used to create the initial artwork.















Air Zimbabwe – old logo

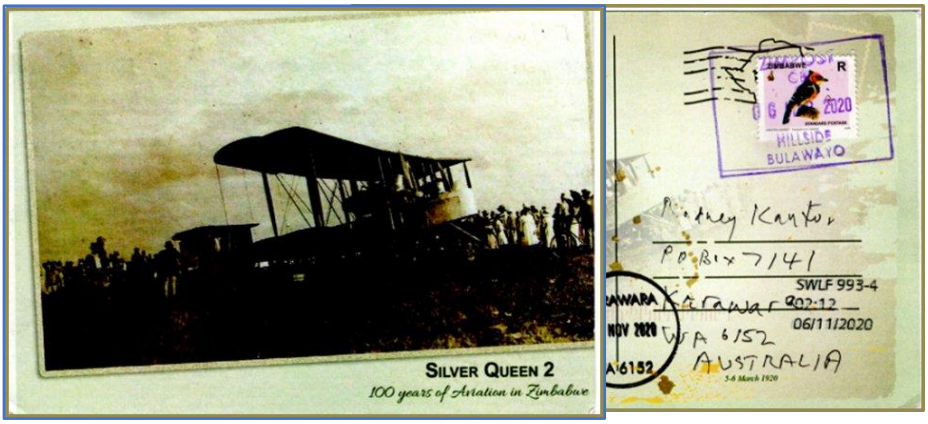


Combination of two photos



Air Zimbabwe – new logo

Other material produced



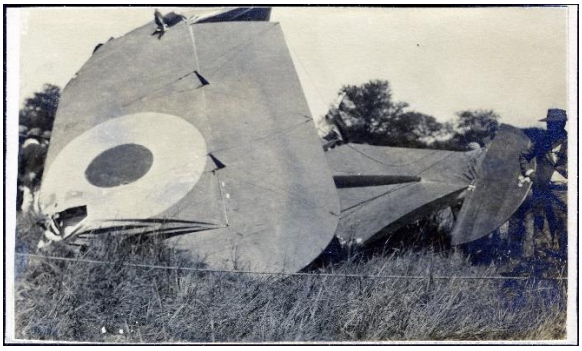
Postcard produced for the centenary,
postmarked on 6 March 2020 in Bulawayo
(Courtesy of Rod Kantor)





Original photographs of the arrival and departure from Bulawayo
of the Silver Queen II on 5th June 1910





Original photographs of the Silver Queen II after crashing, 6th June 1910

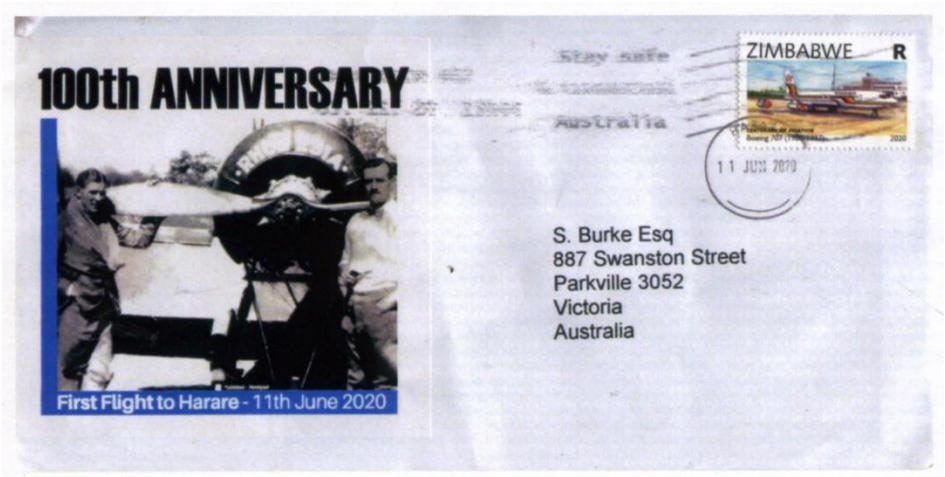
First aeroplane to land at Salisbury (Harare)

Thursday 11th June 2020 is a significant day in the history of Harare in that on this day one hundred years ago the first aeroplane to land in the town touched down just after 11.00 hrs. The aircraft was a converted military AVRO 504K owned by the South African Aerial Transport Company. It was on a tour of the country giving pleasure flights to those who could afford the experience. Two pilots accompanied the aircraft, Mr. Earl Rutherford and Mr. C.R. Thompson. Before arriving in the then Salisbury, they had spent time giving flights in Bulawayo, Gwelo and Gatooma. After Salisbury the tour continued to Rusape, Umtali and Wankie.

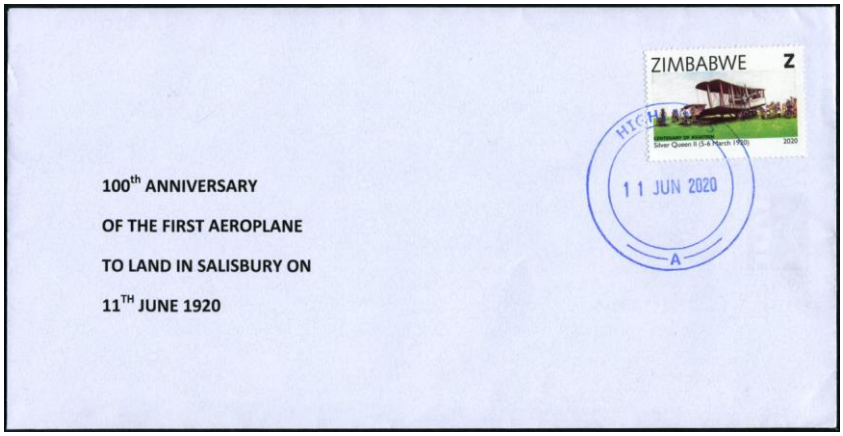
The Mayor, Mr. George Elcombe, selected a site for a landing ground on the old Race Course. This area now comprises the Civic centre with buildings such as the Rainbow Towers Hotel, Conference Centre, Magistrates Courts, Museum, Library, Rowan Martin Building and ZANU (PF) Headquarters.

Mr Thompson travelled by train from Gatooma the previous day to check on the suitability of the site selected by the Mayor.

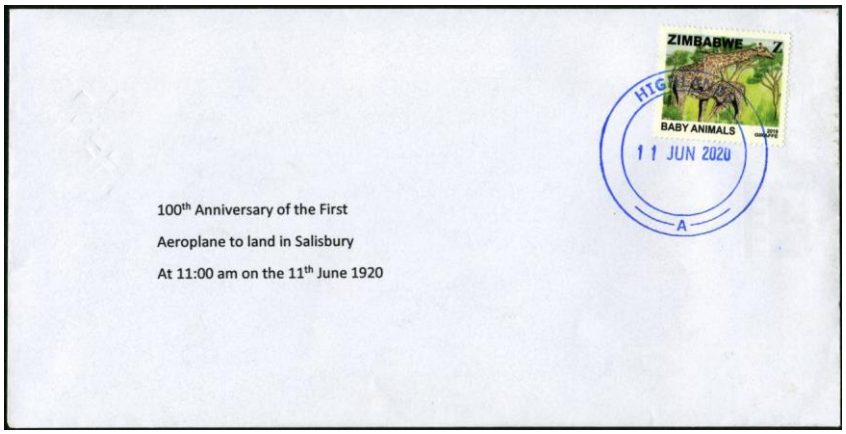
Two Gatooma residents, Messrs Ulyett and Thornton were passengers on the plane when it landed. A large crowd assembled to welcome the aircraft. Mr. Thompson then took the Mayor and Miss Margaret Thompson for a flight over the town. Messrs Thompson and Rutherford remained in the town for ten days giving flips for residents. *(Extract from newsletter by Chairman of History Society Zimbabwe, Mashonaland Branch, R D Taylor)*[4]



Cover celebrating 100th anniversary of first flight to Salisbury on 11th June 1910.
Cover postmarked Harare 11 JUN 2020)
(Source RSC Journal, December 2020)



Cover produced by History Society



Different cover, unknown producer.



Cover produced sponsored by Benham, commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Silver Queen arriving in Cape Town on 20th March 1910

Bibliography:

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear, and is now published on the Rhodesian Study Circle website.
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 2020
3. History Society of Zimbabwe, Mashonaland Branch, newsletter from Chairman R D Taylor
4. 100th anniversary of first flight to Salisbury cover – Rhodesian Study Circle Journal, December 2020, No 283, page 449

Additions/Changes since December 2020	
8-2021	Additional proof material – A, E & R values
12-2021	Z value – shift of perfs down
8-2022	E value – various black lines on stamps
	R value – magenta smudge below 'R'
12-2022	R value - movement of perforations down
	Z value – early strikes of successive perforator strikes
8-2023	Photograph of pilots van Tyneveld & Brand
	Photos and preliminary artwork of issue
8-2024	Different sized miniature sheets
8-2025	Z value, shift of perfs down